Fires in the Mirror Modified Worksheet

Madelyn Schroeder  
  
Based on your viewing of the entire youtube version of Fires in the Mirror which was created from the play for presentation on television, answer the following questions:  
  
1. Describe the stasis in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.  
This play is set in Crown Heights in the year 1991. The story revolves around the death of a seven-year-old black boy who was hit by a Jewish driver, enforcing anti-Semitism and violence amongst the community. The black and the Jews of the community experience growing animosity, resulting in the stabbing of a Jewish student.   
  
2. What is the intrusion?  
The intrusion is when the Jewish rabbi hits the young black boy with his car, as it is this event that propels this play forward and causes the rise in violence and animosity amongst both the blacks and the Jews of the community.   
  
3. What is the unique factor?  
Today is the day that…the rabbi ran over the young boy, and caused outrage amongst the black community, spiking the violence and hostility within Crown Heights.   
  
4. What is the dramatic question that should be answered by the end of the play?  
Will the violence and rioting prevent justice from being served for the death of the seven-year-old boy?

5. In your opinion what is the most theatrical segment of the video version of the play and explain why do you think it is so powerful?  
I believe the scene in which Smith portrays the little boy’s father is the most moving. He has just lost his child so suddenly, and is experiencing a pain that has no comparison. It was incredibly moving to see Smith embody this pain, and remind the audience of the personal pain that resulted from the death of this little boy; for the family, this was a personal loss of a loved one, which I think is easy to forget amongst the violence and hatred that results between the two communities.   
  
6. List some of the themes of the play.  
Religious ignorance

Anti-Semitism Discrimination

Violence Injustice  
  
7. Television allows the actress to create mini sets, a variety of lighting effects, and detailed costume pieces for the presentation of her many characters, not to mention graphic footage of the actual events in Crown Heights. This is frankly not possible to accomplish on the stage which requires that the action move rapidly between one scene and the other leaving little if any time for a change of dress, settings, lights, and props. Describe some of the varieties of these production details that struck you as particularly effective.

Personally, I felt this play would have been impossible to keep up with had it not been for the costuming. The costumes always allowed me to recognize who was Jewish and who was not, who was male and who was female, and overall helped establish the character as separate and unique from the other characters Anna was portraying. The set pieces also helped to establish each character and their own personal setting. Without the costumes and the set pieces, this show would have been rather difficult to follow.